

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With the cancellation herein without prejudice of claims 1, 10, 19 and 20, claims 2 to 9 and 11 to 18 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. Claim for Foreign Priority

Applicants yet again respectfully request acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and an indication that a certified copy of the priority document has been received. A claim for priority to German Application No. 102 35 368.9 was made, inter alia, in the "Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney for Patent Application" submitted on December 5, 2003. A certified copy of German Application No. 102 35 368.9 was submitted to the Office on July 30, 2003.

III. Allowed Claims

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 5 to 8 and 14 to 17 are allowed.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1 to 4, 9 to 13 and 18 to 20 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1 to 4, 9 to 13 and 18 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,818,881. While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the merits of this rejection, to facilitate matters, claims 1, 10, 19 and 20 have been canceled herein without prejudice, claims 2, 3, 9, 11 and 18 have been amended herein without prejudice to depend from claim 5, which was indicated to include allowable subject matter, and claims 4, 12 and 13 now ultimately depend from claim 5.


In view of all of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present rejection is now moot. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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